(ख) से (ङ) राजमार्ग 8क और 8ख पहले से ही राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग हैं। तथापि, निधियों की अति कमी के कारण गुजरात में पिछले दो वर्षों में कोई अन्य राज्यीय सड़क को राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग घोषित नहीं किया गया है।

Raising Wages Salary of Postal Staff

514. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the poor and meagre amount of Wages/salary paid to the postal staff/employees who are working at the grass-root level;

(b) whether there is a need to enhance their wages; and

(c) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in 1996-97 to raise the wages of mail delivering peons, runners, village post masters and other lowpaid postal workers?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) The answer to this question is drafted on the presumption that the term "postal staff at grass root level" refers to Extra Departmental Agents. The Extra Departmental Agents are being paid adequate allowances as per duties performed by them. The allowances being paid to them are not poor and meagre vis-a-vis the service rendered and hours of work put in by them. The extra Departmental Agents are permitted to follow an avocation of their choice in addition to their work in the Department.

(b) Rapid increase in price level and inflationary trends have necessitated enhancement of allowances in respect of Extra Departmental Agents. In consonance with the Constitution of a Pay Commission for Central Government employees, the Department of Post have set up the Justice Talwar Committee to look into the service conditions and wage structure of Extra Departmental Agents.

(c) The One-Man Committee headed by Justice Charanjit Talwar, a retired Judge of Delhi High Court is to go into the service conditions of Extra Departmental Agents and suggest changes thereof as considered necessary. The terms of reference of the Committee inter alia, are as follows:—

(i) To examine the system of extra Departmental Agency, the conditions of employment, the wage structure of the Agents and to recommend suitable changes considered necessary;

(ii) To examine the reasonableness of introducing a Social Security Scheme for providing Provident Fund and retirement benefits for employees engaged on Agency basis;

(iii) To examine and suggest any changes in the method of recruitment, the minimum qualifications for appointment and in the conduct and disciplinary rules; and

(iv) To review facilities provided for the public at different class of Extra Departmental Post Offices.

The final report of the Committee is awaited.

Irrigation Porjects in the North-East Region

515. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of irrigation projects completed/commissioned in the North-East Region;

(b) the amount of expenditure for each project, State-wise;

(c) whether there is any proposal from the State Governments for renovating the projects; and

(d) if so, the details of such proposals of renovated projects, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) and (b) A list of major/